



CASE STUDY

Roger and Susan Hayward

At a glance

Roger and Susan Hayward
Location: Te Akau, Waikato
Calve 400 Angus Pure cows

Challenges

- DNA recording accuracy
- Previous sampling method was time consuming and difficult.

Benefits

- TSU blister pack, visual tag, EID button and TSU all matched and bundled together
- Improve recording accuracy
- Easy to use TSU applicator
- Sample stays viable for longer .

“Tagging, weighing and sampling each calf can be a stressful and time-consuming task, but having the TSU matched with visual and EID tag and bundled together on plastic tray, means you no longer worry there’s going to be mistakes”
Susan Hayward

TSU blister packs prove a gamechanger for Angus Pure breeders

Susan and Roger Hayward – owners of Twin Oaks Angus Station, Te Akau – are proud Angus Pure breeders. While some of their previous ventures included a long stint share milking down south, Roger has always had a keen interest in breeding, starting when he purchased a few Angus cows at fifteen years old. Him and wife, Susan, have since found their passion lies in breeding high quality Angus cattle. They certainly don’t miss the early morning wake up calls to milk the cows or the arduous task of shifting kale breaks. The Allflex TSU sampling unit is proving a huge success for their stud farm operation in the Waikato.

Susan and Roger moved their 300 Angus cows from Canterbury to Waikato in 2016. Prior to this move in 2012 they completed a verification sire parentage trial over the entire bull drop and those results revealed 6% were wrong ...“which we were horrified with.” Susan explains. Although it was much less than



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industry average of 10-15% it was still a huge surprise and certainly something both Susan and Roger agreed needed to be improved. This reiterated the importance and value of tissue sampling to their Angus stud farm operation and kick started their journey with Allflex Tissue Sampling Units.

Four years later they have just finished calving 400 cows, all calves of which were sampled within 24 hours of being born. During calving, the duo visits the paddocks once or sometimes twice a day. They tag, weigh and take a tissue sample of each calf. "The blister packs which Allflex introduced were a game changer", notes Susan. The blister packs contain the visual tag, EID button and TSU all matched and bundled together on a plastic tray. There is no need to manually label the TSU sample, reducing the chances of human mislabeling error. "Tagging, weighing and sampling each calf can be a stressful and time-consuming task, but having the TSU bundled together means you no longer worry there's going to be mistakes", says Susan.

Susan explains last year, they "had 2 cows who had swapped calves and [they] didn't know until the results came back". The testing provides reliable parent verification so you can avoid mix-ups and interbreeding. This has allowed the Hayward's to find "accurate, true breeders". Once calving is complete Susan sends all samples off to be HD50K tested. The samples remain in viable condition for 12 months.

The HD50k is used to read the genomic makeup and that information is then feed into the EBV's (estimated breeding value) giving better reliability and accuracy. "Before we used genomes it was a 50% calibration. 50% was from Mum, 50% from Dad. But we all know that's not exactly how it works. We

can now have a complete breakdown of their traits which they have inherited from previous generations as well". Says Susan.

These first-generation Angus breeders work with Angus Pure, sharing their interest in providing a fantastic paddock to plate experience. "Improving the eating experience could be done through traceability, and it's very accurate, reliable technology. You could attach a QR code to a steak in New York and trust you know where the meat is from. Only through DNA could you accurately provide this traceability and ensure the quality. Paddock to plate is so important". Susan loves to embrace the new science and technology which helps them increase the value of their herd to the end consumer.

After the cows are mating to AI Susan and Roger split their herd into 6 mobs of 60 cows and have 3 bulls in each mob which means there is three potential fathers in each mob. "Management wise, knowing we take TSU samples means we don't have to record what bull was in what mob at what time. The females have one cycle of AI followed by five weeks with the bulls, before pulling the bulls out just in time for Christmas" explains Susan.

Overall, Susan and Roger agree the "TSU is a clean, simple, accurate process" and certainly a massive improvement on other sampling methods such as pulling hairs. The Allflex Identification team are very approachable and always available to answer any questions. They value their relationship with Allflex and appreciate the support Allflex wraps around Angus Pure as well. Susan and Roger now look towards the future. They would like to increase the amount of bulls they sell each year and work on increasing their consistency of breeding high value quality animals across the board.



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